

NSC BRIEFING

6 DECEMBER 1956

DISORDERS IN NORTH VIETNAM

- I. "Counterrevolutionary uprising" in N. Vietnam admitted by Viet Minh.
- A. Occurred in mid-November in Catholic area near Vinh, (160 mi. south Hanoi), and suppressed only after troop reinforcements sent in.
- B. "Uprising" was due to peasant discontent with land reform.
- C. 25X1X6 confirmation Hanoi's guarded admissions, [REDACTED] Viet Minh leaders are "at their wits' end."
- 25X1X6 1. [REDACTED] discontent--mainly rural--very strong in urban Haiphong.
2. Common question is: "How can I get to South Vietnam?"
- 25X1X6 D. [REDACTED] Viet Minh regular army (267,000 troops) remains loyal to regime.
- II. This Oct, Viet Minh leadership was reshuffled on grounds of "mistakes" in land reform.
- A. Truong Chinh (longtime sec-gen) replaced by President Ho Chi Minh (who thus both chairman and sec-gen of Party).
- B. Two other leading Communists dropped in Party rank and fired from Gov't jobs (vice-ministers of Agriculture and Interior).
- C. Although North Vietnamese almost totally ignorant of recent Satellite unrest, Viet Minh leaders--strong supporters of Moscow line--are fully informed.

~~SECRET~~
CONFIDENTIAL

- D. Leaders now declairing "important lessons" will be drawn from the "Hungarian situation" and regime will "pay adequate attention to people's living conditions."
- E. Although we believe Viet Minh regime--supported by a loyal army--is in no immediate jeopardy, we expect one immediate benefit: contrast between progress in South and discontent in North should handicap Viet Minh efforts both to undermine the Diem government and to effect Vietnamese unification on Communist terms.